



Creative Solutions for Stabilizing Conflict

The Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO) is a vital part of the ambitious U.S. effort to be more effective in helping prevent conflict and supporting post-conflict nations recover. CSO advances U.S. national security by working with partners in priority countries to break cycles of violent conflict, strengthen civilian security, and mitigate crisis. Guided by local dynamics and data-driven analysis, CSO works quickly with partners inside and outside government to devise solutions to some of the world's toughest challenges.

Agile. Innovative. Responsive. Results-Driven.

Where We Work

CSO is working in more than 20 countries. Our top-priority initiatives are:

- **Syria:** Providing unarmed Syrian civilian opposition groups the skills, knowledge, networks, and equipment to interrupt cycles of violence and shape the critical first year of Syria's political transition
- **Honduras:** Reducing drug- and gang-related violence through support for public security reform and expanding judicial and investigative capacity
- **Burma:** Supporting the efforts of the government, minority populations, civil society and other stakeholders to address landmines, including raising awareness, clearing minefields and supporting victims

CSO deploys a wide range of civilian talent quickly to address the causes of conflict around the world.

Examples include:

- **Kenya:** Before the March 2013 elections CSO helped Kenyan civil society—notably youth and religious leaders—strengthen community-police relations, engage potential spoilers, and respond to security threats. In April, Secretary Kerry said these investments “helped prevent a repeat of the violence we saw five years ago.”
- **Liberia:** After a government commission failed to determine the cause of a fatal election-related incident, CSO dispatched an investigator who helped unearth evidence that led to police suspensions, further investigation, and action from the Liberian president.
- **Belize:** CSO trained Belizeans to mediate and conduct community dialogues, helping reduce gang-related crime, and built an expanding network of action-oriented community activists.
- **Central Africa:** CSO is countering Joseph Kony's Lord's Resistance Army by encouraging defections and working across four countries with local partners, militaries, governments, and policymakers.
- **South Sudan:** Deploying stabilization officers across remote areas, CSO supported a peaceful transition to independence through engagement with local leaders on longstanding grievances.

Criteria for Targeted Engagement

- Opportunity for **strategic impact within 18 months**
- Address **national security priorities**
- Development of **women and youth leaders**
- Leverage **local ownership** and partnership
- Ability to test and evaluate **innovative approaches**

“We value security and stability in other parts of the world, knowing that failed states are among our greatest security threats, and new partners are our greatest assets”

— Secretary of State John Kerry